

Whitehall

YSTRADGYNLAIS RURAL
DISTRICT COUNCIL

18 AUG 1939

REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer

AND

Sanitary Inspector

FOR THE YEAR

1938

Ystradgynlais Rural District Council

REPORT

of the

Medical Officer
and
Sanitary Inspector

for the Year

1938

To the Chairman and Members of the
Ystradgynlais Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

We have the honour to submit to you the annual report on the Health and Sanitary Conditions of your Area for the year 1938, drawn up in accordance with Circular 172 (Wales).

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Chairman of the Public Health Committee: Councillor Rees Powell, J.P.

Public Health Offices: Council Offices, Ystradgynlais.

Medical Officer of Health (part time): H. R. Stubbins, M.D. (Ed.).

Sanitary Inspector (part time): G J. Rees, C.R.I.S., M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.,

1. The District consists of two parishes, viz—Ystradgynlais Higher and Ystradgynlais Lower.

2. The area of each parish is as follows:—

Ystradgynlais Higher	9,016 acres
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Ystradgynlais Lower	13,182 acres
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22,198 acres

3. The population of the District according to the 1931 Census was as follows:—

Ystradgynlais Higher	1,627
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Ystradgynlais Lower	10,251
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11,878

4. The population of the entire District according to the mid-year return of the Registrar-General was 11,320.

5. The estimated population at the end of 1938 was as follows:—

Ystradgynlais Higher	1,750
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Ystradgynlais Lower	10,550
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12,300

6. The number of inhabited houses in 1938 was 2,763 as compared with 1937 which was 2,705.

7. The Rateable Value of the District and the sum represented by a penny rate of both parishes at the end of 1937 was as follows:—

	£		£
Ystradgynlais Higher	6,018	...	22
Ystradgynlais Lower	28,767	...	99
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	34,785		121

8. Ystradgynlais Higher is more rural in nature than Ystradgynlais Lower. It extends along the valley of the Tawe and includes part of Abercrave, with the hamlets of Penycae, Penwyllt, and Colbren.

A Sewerage scheme is in preparation to deal with the remainder of this area, viz., Ystradgynlais Higher.

Its chief industries are Mining, Limestone Quarrying and Agriculture.

9. Ystradgynlais Lower is mostly Urban in nature and much more thickly populated. The hamlets which have grown up at Bryn Road and Llest of over forty houses; at Wind Road—Croesffyrdd, fourteen houses, and at Cae'r-bont,—Is-y-rhos, of twenty-five houses, have much relieved the previous overcrowding. These houses are all tenanted at very reasonable rents and are built and maintained in good sanitary condition, and having been built on good fertile soil, are well endowed with gardens, which are so acceptable to the tenants. These gardens, with very few exceptions are put to best advantage by careful cultivation by the tenants.

UNSATISFACTORY DWELLINGS

10. There are yet many unfit and condemned houses with tenants who live in hope of redemption from such unhealthy dwellings, and although the Council has made big strides in the direction of wiping out unhealthy dwellings, yet these undertakings take time.

The chief industries of Ystradgynlais Lower are Coal-mining, Tinplate manufacture, Brick making and Agriculture.

The two collieries which now embrace the entire coal-mining industry of this district give steady employment to the miners engaged there.

The tinplate trade, which has occasionally shown hopes of a revival of its former standard, still suffers from depression. The Ynisedwyn tinplate works, recently fitted

up with up-to-date, costly machinery, has made a steady advance, and considering the depression of trade throughout the country is making a good effort at revival.

Brickmaking in the district still continues at low level. Let us hope that an early improvement in this business may soon be noticeable.

11.

BIRTHS

Live Births:	Males	Females	Total	thousand
Legitimate	92	81	173	14.41
Illegitimate	2	3	5 .....	.42
	<hr/> 94	<hr/> 84	<hr/> 178	<hr/> 14.83
Still Births:				
Legitimate	5	9	14	1.16
Illegitimate	2	1	3 .....	.25
	<hr/> 7	<hr/> 10	<hr/> 17	<hr/> 1.41

Table of Births as registered, sex and rate per thousand population for ten years from 1929 to 1938 inclusive:

Year	Population	Males	Females	Total	Rate per thousand
1929	12,160	116	105	221	18.11
1930	11,970	108	106	214	18.46
1931	11,878	95	86	131	16.16
1932	11,760	79	108	187	16.01
1933	12,000	87	90	177	14.75
1934	11,840	75	106	181	15.28
1935	11,720	95	84	179	15.27
1936	11,490	109	82	191	16.63
1937	11,380	88	80	168	14.75
1938	11,320	94	84	178	15.73

From this table it will seen that the Birth Rate still remains low as it shows a gradual decline from about 18 per thousand population ten years ago to 15.73 births per thousand for the year gone by.

DEATHS

12. 117 deaths were registered in the district, viz.,

Males 68

Females 49

Deaths at Institutions: Males 15; Females 19.

Deaths of Women at childbirth: Nil.

Deaths of Infants under 1 year: Males, 4; Females, 8;;
or 61 per thousand live births.

TRANSFERABLE DEATHS

Inwards 23

Outwards 21

The following is a list of deaths as registered during the year, 1938, with nine previous years in comparison:—

Year	Population	Males	Females	Total	Rate per thousand
1929	12,160	64	62	126	10.36
1930	11,970	73	77	150	12.53
1931	11,878	78	64	142	11.91
1932	11,760	67	79	146	12.41
1933	12,000	76	70	146	12.17
1934	11,840	70	52	122	10.31
1935	11,720	73	50	123	10.49
1936	11,490	68	43	111	9.66
1937	11,380	60	51	111	9.75
1938	11,320	68	49	117	10.33
as compared with 11.6 all England and Wales.					

As shewn in this table, the death rate per 1.000 has been nearly stationary for the last four years.

13. Table of deaths as registered during 1938 with a complete analysis of the Causes of Deaths which occurred within that year as follows:—

	Male	Female
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	3 ...	2
Whooping Cough	— ...	—
Diphtheria	— ...	—
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	— ...	—
Other Tuberculosis	1 ...	—
Cancer	6 ...	5
Diabetes	— ...	1
Cerebral Haemorrhage	5 ...	5
Heart Disease	20 ...	13
Other Circulatory Diseases	2 ...	—
Bronchitis	2 ...	1
Pneumonia	2 ...	1
Other Respiratory Diseases	2 ...	—
Peptic Ulcer	1 ...	—
Appendicitis, Diarrhoea	— ...	—
Other Digestive Diseases	1 ...	1
Acute Chronic Nephritis	3 ...	4
Other Puerperal Causes	— ...	1
Congenital Debility	1 ...	4
Senility	5 ...	4
Suicide	— ...	—
Other Violence	6 ...	1
Other Defined Diseases	6 ...	4
Cirrhosis of Liver	— ...	1
Causes Ill Defined	— ...	1
Premature Birth	— ...	—
Influenza	1 ...	—
Cerebro Spinal	1 ...	—
	68	49
	—	—
Total 117		

14.

NEW CASES NOTIFIED

Age Periods		New Cases				Deaths			
		Resp.		Non-Resp		Resp.		Non-Resp	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0	.....	—	...	—	...	—	...	—	...
1	.....	—	...	—	...	—	...	—	...
5	.....	—	...	—	...	—	...	—	...
15	.....	—	...	1	...	—	...	—	...
25	.....	3	...	3	...	—	...	—	...
35	.....	—	...	—	...	—	...	1	...
45	.....	1	...	—	...	1	...	—	...
55	.....	—	...	—	...	—	...	—	...
65 & upwards	.....	—	...	1	...	—	...	—	...
Total	.....	4	...	3	...	2	...	1	...

15.

GENERAL RESUME

The year from a health point of view has been a satisfactory one. The number of infectious diseases notified being only 13 as compared with 72 last year. While it was found necessary during 1937 to close 13 schools owing to epidemics. This year, no such procedure had to be taken. The death rate for your Area was 10.3 per thousand of the population as compared with 11.6 for England and Wales. Again it is very pleasant to record that there were no deaths of women due to childbirth.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES

16. Dr. W. F. W. Betenson, Medical Officer of Health for Breconshire, pays professional visits to this District.

17. **Infant Welfare Centres.** There are four Infant Welfare Centres established in the district, viz., Cwmtwrch, Ystradgynlais, Abercrave, and Colbren.

The attendances at these Centres show how much their teachings have been appreciated, and the improved general health of those children is eloquent testimony of the good work done at the Centres.

18. **Home Nursing.** There are Nursing Associations constantly operating in each of those districts. All these centres maintain a well equipped service. Grants are made to these Nursing Associations by the County Council.

19. **Midwives.** Number of Midwives practising in the area: There are four practising Midwives in the district. These Midwives are fully qualified and give general satisfaction. Three of these act for the Nursing Association.

20. National Health Insurance which has operated extensively throughout the entire District still works satisfactorily.

21. Poor Law Medical Out-Relief. Work under this heading will, in a measure, come under the National Health Insurance Scheme.

22. Laboratory Facilities. Examinations of pathological and bacteriological specimens are made at the Beck Laboratory, Swansea.

23. Hospitals. Infectious Diseases Hospital: New Infectious Diseases Hospital is in course of erection at Brecon.

Sanatoria: Craigynos Hospital under the Welsh National Memorial Association.

Penrhiewtyn Hospital, Neath: This is the municipal hospital of the Glamorgan County Council, and serves the Glamorgan Area. The Breconshire County Council has an arrangement with the Glamorgan County Council for the admittance of complicated cases of midwifery.

Swansea Voluntary Hospital, Swansea: This is a fully-equipped hospital of 331 beds and most of the inhabitants of the district have joined the Contributory Scheme.

24. Maternity and Nursing Homes. When required the maternity and nursing homes at Swansea are utilised.

25. Maternal Mortality. No cases of maternal mortality have been recorded.

26. Institutional Provision for Unmarried Mothers is made for those cases at Brecon Poor Law Institution, and by arrangement with the Glamorgan Public Assistance Institution at Pontardawe.

27. Institutional Provision for the care of Mental Defectives. Adequate accommodation and provision are made at the Mid-Wales County Hospital, Talgarth, Brecon.

28. Ambulance Facilities are supplied by the local Ambulance Association which provide two ambulances of the latest type. The Committee of the Association has arrangements with the St. John Ambulance at Cwmllynfell and the Ystalyfera Ambulance Car Committee to help one another in emergency.

29. Local Government Act, 1929. The question of the Isolation Hospital still has the attention of the Council.

30. **Ophthalmia Neonatorum.** No cases notified.

31. **Cancer.** Facilities for Radium treatment are given at Swansea Hospital and a few selected cases are treated every year.

32. **Tuberculosis.** The Welsh National Memorial Association hold a Clinic fortnightly in Church Terrace, Ystradgynlais, under the supervision of Dr. Jordan.

33. **Orthopaedic Treatment for School Children.** Clinics are held at Yniscedwyn School under the County Council and visited by Mr. A. O. Parker, Orthopaedic Surgeon to the County Council.

THE SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31st, 1938.

34. The estimated number of dwelling houses:—

Ystradgynlais Higher	412
Ystradgynlais Lower	2351
Number of Schools within the district	10
Number of Cowsheds, Dairies and Milk Shops.	93
Number of Workshops	28
Number of Slaughter houses	8

35. Dwelling houses with Private water supply:—

(a) Ystradgynlais Higher	288
(b) Ystradgynlais Lower	1868
(c) Cwmtwrch Joint Water Scheme	389

36. Number of Dwelling houses:—

With baths	983
With water closets	2615
With slop water system	49
Pail and privy system (outlying districts chiefly)	350

37. Number of Schools:

With private water supply	10
On the water carriage system	9
On the pail or primitive system	1

28. **Inspections:**

Inspections and re-inspections made under the Housing Acts, 1909–1936 and

also the Public Health Acts 1875–1936 in general.

Inspection and re-inspection of premises	3633
Inspections of workshops	118
Inspections of dairies, cowsheds and milk shops	123
Inspections of private slaughter-houses	149
Inspections of schools	63

39. Nuisances:

Nuisances arising from drains	19
Insufficient and defective sanitary conveniences	23
Dampness in walls	34
Other nuisances—various	18

40. Summary of Improvements Effected:

(1) Open areas constructed around dwellinghouses	16
(2) Dampness in walls of dwelling-houses remedied	22
(3) Troughing provided and repaired	19
(4) Adjacent and dwelling areas paved and repaved	79
(5) House roofs repaired	36
(6) Base of chimneys remedied, also parapet walls	23
(7) Main walls of dwelling houses coated with cement	37
(8) Houses provided with a private water supply	79
(9) Houses with water fittings repaired	49
(10) Existing houses where sanitary conveniences were provided	29
(11) Number of drains re-constructed	17
(12) Accumulations of manure removed	10

41. Notices Served:

Preliminary Notices	114
Statutory Notices	13

42 Drains Constructed:	
Recognised schemes	6
Main drains	8
Branch drains	217
43. Dairies, Cowsheds and Milk Shops:	
Number of cowsheds on Register ...	105
Number of milk sellers on Register ...	93
Number of inspections	167
Number of defects	14
Nuisances arising from manure heaps	3
Cowsheds to limewash	2
44. Slaughterhouses:	
Number of slaughterhouses on Register	8
Number of "licensed" slaughterhouses	6
Number of Registered slaughter- houses	2
Number of Inspections	68
Number of defects	1
Nuisances from insufficient lime- washing	3
Nuisances from want of cleanliness ...	2
45. Workshops:	
Number of workshops on Register ...	28
Number of inspections	111
Nuisances from overcrowding	—
Nuisances from want of cleansing ...	1
Nuisances from limewashing overdue	—
Nuisances from ventilation— indifferent	—
46. Housing Acts, 1930–1936:	
Number of dwelling houses inspected	117
Number of inspections and re-inspections	234
Number of ill-conditioned dwelling- houses	59
Number of houses that require con- siderable repairs and recondition- ing	58
47. Inspection of Dwellinghouses under the Housing Acts during the year:	
Number of dwellinghouses inspected	136

Number of dwellinghouses demolished as a result of formal procedure under Section 11—1936, &c.	19
Number of dwelling houses closed but not demolished as a result of Undertakings by owners under Section 11 not to use the houses for human habitation	37
Parts of buildings closed—Section 12	4
Number of dwelling houses made fit:	
(1) As a result of formal notices under Sections 9 to 12	39
(2) As a result of informal notices preliminary to formal procedure under Sections 9 to 12	28
Number of houses represented to the Council for demolition under Section 19 and “Closing Order” under Section 20 of the Housing Act, 1930, and moreover under Section 10 and Section 12 of the Housing (Slum Clearance) Act, 1936	68
Number of dwellinghouses or parts thereof including basement rooms which are occupied as dwellings represented to the Council with a view to serving “Closing Orders”	4

48.—**The General Character of Defects.** Aspect: An ill-aspect in relation to the compass and in consequence ill-health. Site: Damp sites and devoid of sub soil drainage; foundations devoid of concrete, the absence of a damp proof course inserted between the ground and the upper walls to prevent dampness by capillary attraction rising in the walls; main wall too thin and friable and in exposed situations, main walls erected adjacent to the strata necessitating open areas, base of chimneys instead of lead flashings being inserted to overlap stepwise in the brickwork is protected by a fillet of cement only—this defect with parapet walls also is invariably not infrequent; insufficient lap allowed for slates when roof covering; insufficient troughing with improper spouting; rainwater pipes connected with drains instead of discharging to a gully trap—thus trapping the air in the drain just below the eaves. Soil pipes and drain upcasts pipes too short, should be at

least two feet above the eaves, window sills unthroated—chimneys with no fireplaces in bedrooms indicating dampness chiefly in chimney breasts, insufficient light, no back doors for through ventilation. Such fireplaces are also required (1) to maintain normal and uniform temperature during illness, (2) to improve ventilation, (3) to burn scraps of food, &c., after patient therein suffering from an infectious disease. Insufficient height in room, resulting in the agencies from respiration such as organic matter and carbonic acid (CO_2) polluting the air of the rooms at breathing point.

49.—**Disinfection.** The number of rooms fumigated after infectious diseases: 18.

SCAVENGING

50.—The Council's administrative area is divided into two parishes, viz.:

Ystradgynlais Higher,

Ystradgynlais Lower.

Ystradgynlais Higher is divided into two sections, viz.: Colbren, also Caehopkin and Penycae. At Colbren the collection of house refuse was made four half days weekly, whereas Caehopkin and Penycae collection of refuse was made six days weekly.

During the year the number of loads collected at the former was 381, whereas the latter number of loads collected was 853.

Ystradgynlais Lower, is divided into three sections, viz., Abercrave, Ystradgynlais and Cwmtwrch. The collection of refuse and street sweepings at Abercrave was made on six days weekly.

Cwmtwrch Section. Collection of house refuse and street sweepings within this section is made six days weekly—likewise the Ystradgynlais section where urban conditions exist. Six days weekly are employed for the purpose of house and street refuse collections.

The estimated number of loads collected during the year within the Ystradgynlais Lower Parish was 4,341 loads.

The Council has four excellent refuse disposal sites where "controlled" tipping is carried on, a method with which the Ministry of Health is highly favourable.

The refuse disposal site attendant was appointed three years ago to attend to the sites so as to keep everything in order.

51. BUILDINGS ERECTED IN 1938.

	Ystradgynlais		Total
	Higher	Lower	
Dwelling houses	6	46	52
Bungalows	0	1	1
Additions	0	4	4
Flats	0	0	0
Garages	0	31	31
Other buildings	0	5	5
Cowsheds	1	0	1
			<hr/> 94

52. Schools Closed owing to Epidemics. Nil.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOODS

53. **Milk Supply.** The Public Health Acts with regard to the prevention of Tuberculosis are applied to the distribution of milk in the district. Constant and careful supervision of cowsheds, dairies, and milk utensils is made, and the distributors and milkers are clean and attentive to the sanitary requirements. Repeated tests are made and supplies are found satisfactory.

54. **Meats and Other Foods.** Meats and other food-stuffs are continually being inspected and supervised where possible, by the Sanitary Inspector. Considerable attention is given to this important section by frequent inspections of slaughter-houses and any diseased organs are destroyed.

The following table shows the work done in connection with slaughtering.

CARCASES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED

	Cattle exclud- ing Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed (if known)	96	13	94	440	203
Number inspected	96	13	94	440	203
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned	13	8	—	—	5
All diseases except Tuber- culosis| Whole carcase condemned	—	—	—	—	—
Percentage of the num- ber inspected with dis- ease other than Tuber- culosis	13.1	61.5	—	—	2.4
Tuberculosis only: Whole carcase condemned ...	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part of organ was con- demned	3	—	—	—	—
Percentage of the num- ber inspected affected with Tuberculosis	3.1	—	—	—	—

55. **Adulteration.** No cases of adulteration have been discovered.

56. **Prevalence of, and Control Over, Infectious and other Diseases:**

- (1) Where Tuberculosis cases are diagnosed in the district, they are immediately reported to the County Medical Officer of Health, and submitted to the Tuberculosis Physician for examination.
- (2) Hospital accommodation. See paragraph 23.
- (3) Vaccinations—Primary and re-Vaccination. There were 80 successful vaccinations, including the re-vaccinations. A number of objectors failed to procure the necessary exemption before the child reached the age of four months.
- (4) Non-notifiable Acute Infectious Diseases. The teaching staffs of schools continue to give due intimation of every epidemic affecting their pupils, and the names and details of contacts.

During the year we were fortunate in only having notified cases of Infectious Diseases.

Anti-toxin is provided free of charge to practitioners for the treatment of diphtheria.

NOTIFIABLE AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES DURING THE YEAR 1938

57. Notifiable diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the year 1938.

Diphtheria	3
Erysipelas	1
Scarlet Fever	9
	13

58. **Prevention of Blindness:** All cases of severe eye disease are referred to the Swansea General Hospital.

59. HOME OFFICE FORM 572.

(1) INSPECTIONS for purpose of provisions as to health. Including inspections made by Sanitary Inspector

Premises	Inspections	Number of Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
Factories with mechanical power	49	1	—
Factories without mechanical power ...	74	1	—
Other Premises under the Act (including works of building and engineering construction but not including outworkers' premises)	—	—	—
Total ...	123	2	—

(2) DEFECTS FOUND :

Particulars	Found	Number of Defects:			Prosecutions instituted
		Remedied	Referred to H.M. Inspector	Number of defects in respect of which	
Want of cleanliness	1	...	1	...	—
Overcrowding	—	...	—	...	—
Unreasonable temperature	—	...	—	...	—
Inadequate ventilation	—	...	—	...	—
Ineffective drainage of floors ...	—	...	—	...	—
Sanitary Conveniences:					
Insufficient	—	...	—	...	—
Unsuitable or defective	1	...	1	...	—
Not separate for sexes	—	...	—	...	—
Total ...	2	...	2	...	—

POLLUTION OF RIVERS AND STREAMS

60. Contamination or pollution of local rivers and streams is watched, and prevented where possible.

61. RAINFALL FOR 1938

The following particulars, as indicated, have been very kindly supplied by Miss Lily Williams, Wern House, Ystalyfera.

Month	Total Depth:		Greatest fall in 24 hours		Number of days with .01 or more recorded	
	Inches	Date	Inches			
January	11.17	15	1.10	.....	25	
February	4.14	28	.99	.....	12	
March	1.84	25	1.03	.....	8	
April .....	.41	24	.24	.....	3	
May	6.32	16	1.35	.....	18	
June	5.95	27	1.44	.....	18	
July	6.53	7	1.04	.....	21	
August	6.56	5	1.57	.....	18	
September ...	2.71	18	.87	.....	14	
October	13.00	13	2.89	.....	24	
November ...	11.21	11	1.29	.....	26	
December ...	6.85	10	1.21	.....	19	
Total ...	76.69				206	

Rain gauge: Diameter of funnel, 5 inches; height of top above ground, 1ft. 6ins.; above sea level 240 feet.

ANNUAL RAINFALL

For 12 months ended
31st December

	Inches
1929	75.78
1930	80.57
1931	71.23
1932	71.59
1933	53.21
1934	68.35
1935	70.29
1936	60.26
1937	58.32
1938	76.69

686.29

Average for last 10 years 68.62

Average for last 45 years 68.59

The following particulars, as indicated, have been kindly supplied by Mrs. H. L. Davies, Post Office, Penwyllt.

Month	Total Depth:		Greatest fall in 24 hours		Number of days with .01 or more recorded	
	Inches		Date	Inches		
January	12.08	.....	15	1.54	.....	23
February	5.28	.....	27	1.80	.....	13
March	2.69	.....	25	.95	.....	9
April .....	.43	.....	3	.26	.....	5
May	4.86	.....	30	.80	.....	16
June	7.61	.....	2	1.57	.....	18
July	7.18	.....	7	1.28	.....	22
August	6.36	.....	5	1.33	.....	19
September ...	2.38	.....	19	.90	.....	14.
October	12.21	.....	13	2.20	.....	23
November ...	11.07	.....	13	1.41	.....	27
December ...	6.62	.....	10	1.06	.....	22
Total ...	78.77					211

Rain gauge: Diameter of funnel, 5 inches; height of top above ground, 1 foot; above sea level, 900 feet.

We are, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servants,

H. R. STUBBINS, Medical Officer of Health

G. J. REES, Sanitary Inspector,

C.R.I.S., M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A. (London by Exam.)

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